

## **FALSE PROPAGANDA By Lt Col. A.S.Amarasekera.**

Paul Joseph Goebbles the Propaganda Minister of Adolf Hitler was the father of false propaganda. He believed that a lie repeated many times over will be accepted as the truth. Making use of this idea it was possible for him to motivate the whole of the German nation to actively participate in the Second World War and thus to lead that nation to destruction.

History is repeating itself in a different theatre of war in this part of the world. The LTTE propaganda machine during the last few decades has been very successful in putting into practice Paul Joseph Goebbles idea to near perfection, of repeating lies many times over to make these lies to be accepted as the truth. By so doing they have succeeded in misleading not just the Tamil community, but many nations of the world.

The Tamil population living in this country has enjoyed more privileges than any minority living in any other country. The education facilities available to them during the colonial era were far superior to that available to the majority Sinhala population. This resulted in them gaining the most prestigious appointments in government services. Even in the medical, engineering and legal practices the balance tilted very heavily in their favour, before and soon after independence.

However, with independence there was a concerted effort to alleviate the grievances of the majority and as a result most of the undue advantages and privileges enjoyed by the Tamil minority were eroded. This was made use of by power hungry Tamil politicians to gain political power by segregating the Tamils and motivating them towards an unwarranted liberation struggle.

It is an unwarranted liberation struggle because the Tamil people are still enjoying privileges that no other minority in any other country is blessed with. If this was not so, why do the majority of the Tamil people, as much as 75% decide to live among the Sinhala people in the government controlled areas, without living in the so called LTTE controlled areas? How is it that 75% of all business establishments in Colombo are owned by Tamils?

Tamil, a language spoken by a minority of 15% has got equal parity status with the Sinhala language spoken by the majority of 83% as a national language of the country. Therefore any person has the right to be educated through the medium of either of the national languages.

A Member of Parliament or a member of a local authority is entitled to perform his duties and discharge his functions in Parliament or in any local authority in either Sinhala or Tamil. Tamil language has to be used as the language of administration for the maintenance of public records and the transaction of all business by public institutions and for exercising original jurisdiction in the Northern and Eastern Provinces, where there is a Tamil majority.

The state recognizes both Sinhala and Tamil people as citizens either by descent or by virtue of registration. The state as per Constitution has to ensure equality of opportunity to all citizens of Sri Lanka be they Sinhala or Tamil and has to ensure that no citizen shall suffer any disability on the grounds of race, religion, language, caste, sex, political opinion or occupation. The national flag has two colours to represent the two minorities the Tamils and the Muslims. Such recognition is not given to minorities in the national flag of any other nation.

I have not gone into a detailed account of how the Constitution of this country goes beyond the provisions provided in other countries to ensure that the minorities in this country are not discriminated. In fact at times it does infringe upon the rights of the majority to ensure national integration.

A good example in this regard is the very name used in the Constitution. A conditional treaty of cession called the Kandyan Convention was signed between the Sinhalese and the British on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1815. The name used in this convention both in English and the Sinhala text for the ceded territory was Sinhala, the name by which the island was known through the centuries. However, in the name of national integration, the ancient name of Sinhala has been changed and a new name called Sri Lanka has been introduced through the Constitution of the country.

Would France, Germany, England, Norway or any other country have changed its name and eroded the just rights of its majority to give equal status to the minorities in their country in the name of national integration? France is the land of the French people, England is the land of the English people, Norway is the land of the Norwegian people and so on and so forth. Similarly, had the name not been changed in this country, Sinhala would have continued to be the land of the Sinhala people. Today it has become the land of its entire citizen, Sinhala, Tamil, Muslim and other communities.

S.J.V.Chelvanayakam who was thrown out of Malaysia for trying to fuel communal violence in that country is the father of separatism in this country. To gain political power he was the first to introduce the idea of Tamil Eelam. It was his idea that the Tamils should ask for “a little now and more later.” His first demand was for Rata Saba. This was not acceptable to the Sinhala people in the south. However, over the years the Sinhala people though unwillingly did allow initially the establishment of District Councils and then Provincial Councils, which has all the ingredients of Rata Saba. Then “the more later” came in the form of a temporary merger of the North and the East, which was forced on the people without a mandate by Mr. J.R Jayawardena, the Executive President of the country.

This temporary merger has continued without the mandate of the people for well over 18 years. All the concessions that have been made by the Sinhala people though unwillingly, have failed to usher in the much talked about peace, because the effort to achieve this so called state of Eelam for the Tamil people still continues through acts of brutal terrorism.

If peace is ever to be achieved the two sides at war must learn to concede to acceptable demands made by each other. The two sides to the conflict in this country has polarized to be the Government of Sri Lanka (GOSL) and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), as such let us take an over view of what one side has given the other.

First let us consider the GOSL and what it has given to the LTTE. Though there is much the GOSL has conceded to the LTTE, I will list just a dozen examples for the purpose of explanation.

1. It continues to provide all the administrative support through Government Agents and Divisional Secretaries to areas under so called LTTE control, which include food, shelter and agricultural assistance, medical and health facilities, education and higher educational facilities, maintenance of roads, electrical and water supply where ever possible and any other facility that is the responsibility of a government.
2. It de-proscribed the LTTE in this country and subsequently its foreign ministers went round the world to canvass proscribing the LTTE in other countries, while it remained de-proscribed in this country.
3. It provided even arms and ammunition to the LTTE during the period of President Premadasa.
4. It provided hotel accommodation to the LTTE terrorists in the best of hotels in Colombo with state security during the failed peace talks.
5. It destroyed the fighting morale of the security forces through the Sudu Nelum and Tawalama program of work during the Chandrika Bandaranaike period.
6. It accepted an area that was demarcated as the LTTE controlled area sans the mandate of the people and even the head of state, the President, through a cease fire agreement signed by the then Prime Minister, without the approval or knowledge of the Parliament or the people. This permitted the LTTE, to raise and develop an Army, Navy and Air Force by granting them land that the GOSL or Security Forces were not permitted to monitor, supervise or enter.
7. It allowed LTTE to establish police stations and courts in the LTTE controlled areas and to collect taxes as they pleased in these areas during the Ranil Wickramasinghe period.
8. It exposed the Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol activity of the Security Forces and thereby jeopardized national security and made it possible for the LTTE to kill many of the brave Security Forces personnel during the Ranil Wickramasinghe period.
9. It supplied the most sophisticated satellite and radio equipment to the LTTE during the Ranil Wickramasinghe period, to enable them to carry on their propaganda campaign.
10. It supplied Air force helicopters to transport the LTTE terrorists for peace talks during the Ranil Wickramasinghe and Chandrika Bandaranaike periods.
11. It provided the best of medical treatment to an LTTE terrorist leader in a Colombo Private Hospital with state security during the Ranil Wickramasinghe period and the Secretary of Defence visited this terrorist leader with a basket of fruit.
12. There are rumours afloat that it even allowed Chandrika Bandaranaike to sponsor Prabhakaran's daughter for education abroad.

You can go on adding to this list many other facilities that the GOSL provided to the LTTE in search of peace, but what was the response received from the LTTE.

1. Their demands remained the same and peace talks were only a method of buying time to re-organize and re-arm for the next Eelam war.
2. They did stop killing security forces personnel for a short while, after signing the cease fire agreement, but continued to eliminate their political opponents with impunity.
3. They did not allow the GOSL to even conduct a proper census in the so called LTTE controlled areas.
4. They did not allow the Tamil population in the so called LTTE controlled areas to participate in free and fair elections
5. They exploded many suicide bombs destroying life and property with impunity.
6. They continued recruiting and training child soldiers.
7. They attacked the two most hallowed places of Buddhist worship namely Sri Maha Bodhi and Dalada Maligawa to incite the Sinhala Buddhist public, but the people they tried to incite remained calm and did not commit any acts of revenge.
8. They have killed one President and injured another and have also killed many ministers including a foreign minister who was a Tamil. They even killed the former Prime Minister of India.
9. They attacked and slaughtered many innocent Sinhala villagers some of them pregnant mothers and infant children.
10. They ambushed and killed thirty three Buddhist monks.
11. They have after a short respite during the cease fire recommenced attacking the Sri Lanka Navy at sea using suicide boats. The latest being the failed attack on the passenger ship Pearl Cruise carrying 710 security forces personnel.
12. They have recommenced attacking the Security Forces and Police vehicles using claymore mines and even attempted to kill the Army commander using a pregnant female suicide bomber, but the Security Forces and Police have acted with restraint.

I have only given a dozen examples for the purpose of explanation. There are many more atrocities committed by the LTTE that could be added on to this list.

I would therefore call this war between the GOSL and the LTTE, the most humanitarian war ever fought in the history of warfare, because GOSL virtually looks after all the needs of the LTTE, which even includes the medical treatment of injured LTTE fighters in government hospitals. Prabhakaran has only to worry about how to subjugate the Tamil people and then wage a terrorist war against the GOSL.

The main reason for the LTTE to receive so much international sympathy for so long for such a blatantly unjust terrorist war was the efficiency of the LTTE propaganda machine in spreading falsehood and the inefficiency of the GOSL in countering this falsehood with the truth, through its foreign service, namely the Embassies and High Commissions

